

# NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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## **METROPOLIS MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO METHAMPHETAMINE CONSPIRACY**

Randy G. Massey, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, today announced the plea of guilty to an indictment for conspiracy to manufacture and possess with intent to distribute over 50 grams of methamphetamine in Massac County, IL . The plea took place in United States District Court at Benton, Illinois on June 15, 2006.

**Robert J. McFarland**, age 25, of Metropolis, Illinois entered a plea of guilty to the one count indictment returned against him by a United States Grand Jury in Benton, Illinois. That indictment alleged his involvement in a conspiracy to manufacture and possess with intent to distribute over 50 grams of a mixture and substance containing methamphetamine between November 2003 and May 2005. The maximum potential sentence in this case is 40 years imprisonment, a \$2 million dollar fine, and at least 4 years of supervised release.

At the hearing on his change of plea, the defendant admitted to being involved in a conspiracy with Harold Owens of Ullin, Illinois, who has previously plead guilty and is awaiting sentencing in United States District Court in the Western District of Kentucky. According to the factual basis, Owens, who was arrested at his home in May of 2004, after the execution of a search warrant revealed that Owens was in possession of over 2 pounds of methamphetamine. The investigation also determined that McFarland was a distributor for Owens in and around Massac County.

Under Federal Law, a defendant is required to be detained upon a finding of guilt to a federal controlled substance offense where the potential penalty exceeds ten years imprisonment. McFarland, who had been on pretrial release, was ordered to voluntarily surrender to the U.S. Marshal on June 26, 2006, at 1:30 p.m., pending his sentencing hearing which has been set for September 14, 2006 at 10:00a.m.

Investigation into the case was handled by the Illinois State Police, the Southern Illinois Drug Task Force, the Madisonville, KY Police Department, and by the United States Drug Enforcement Administration.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Michael C. Carr.